



## *Embassy of the United States of America*

Public Affairs Office

### **PRESS RELEASE**

Freetown

January 16, 2013

Contact: Boa Lee

Tel: 076 515 000

### **SALBOT and American Partners Provide Books to U.S. Peace Corps Volunteers**

FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE – On January 15, representatives of the Sierra Leone Book Trust (SALBOT) officially handed over more than 4,000 school books to Peace Corps staff. SALBOT coordinated the donation in partnership with several U.S.-based organizations. The organizations included Books for Africa, Books without Borders, and Sabre Foundation, among others. The donation consisted of texts on science, communications, reference materials, and easy readers for primary students. Some of the Peace Corps Volunteers currently serving in the country will distribute the books to junior and senior secondary schools throughout Sierra Leone. The books will even be used to set up school libraries in some areas.

The U.S. Ambassador to Sierra Leone Michael Owen said that the books will have a positive impact on schools and pupils nationwide. Ambassador Owen highlighted that the book donation not only signifies the development partnership between the Sierra Leone and United States governments, but also represents the good will of both countries' people to make a difference.

Peace Corps Country Director Dr. Valerie Staats commended SALBOT and other partners for bringing the books to the country. She said that the 106 cartons of books will be distributed to all 12 districts of Sierra Leone where Peace Corps Volunteers are teaching, and she introduced the two Peace Corps Volunteers, Meghan Welsh and Cash Kunze, who are heading the effort.

SALBOT was founded in 2002 by Sallieu Turay as an indigenous nongovernmental organization with the aim of providing books to help increase the literacy rate in Sierra Leone. Since 2004, the U.S. Embassy in Sierra Leone and SALBOT have worked together to distribute tens of thousands of books to schools, libraries, and partner organizations throughout Sierra Leone.

The Peace Corps started in 1961. More than 200,000 people have served as Peace Corps Volunteers in one of 139 host countries. The volunteers work on issues ranging from AIDS education to information technology and environmental preservation. For more information, please see [www.peacecorps.gov](http://www.peacecorps.gov).

###